

Saint Joan of Arc

L. WHEATON.

From the "Dublin Review."

IF the French, in mid-war, promised a Church, worthy of her, in honor of the Blessed Jeanne d'Arc, should the Allied cause be victorious, then the promise remains to be redeemed. Throughout the terrible struggle on the Western Front there has been a continual subconscious sense of the Maid's presence and mission. The martyrdom of Rheims (the scene of her brief earthly glory), the memory of that old fight for the liberation of France in which she figured so simply and so splendidly, these and other associations have touched the imagination of even her ancient foes, and as an English regiment filed past her statue, on entering a French town, man after man saluted it with a chivalrous "Pardon, Jeanne!" In the realm of literature, too, the English have already amply atoned for their very natural part in the Maid's tragedy, for Jeanne has had her admirers and defenders among men of letters in both England and America for a good century.

In the last decade or two of years, we have had lives of St. Francis of Assisi, St. Bernard, St. Teresa, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Francis Xavier, by writers who too evidently are outside the atmosphere of their subjects. It is impossible for our Saints to be understood by those who have not shared in their fulness of life, who have not known Christ in the breaking of bread. The bare facts may be carefully accurate, but the interpretation is often far afield, and the letter killeth, where the spirit quickeneth not. In the case of Jeanne, however, the true artist has his own privilege. He has been allowed to look if not to live within that sacred inner sanctuary where Saints are fashioned, and to apprehend with the poet's instinct what the mere scholar may miss. "Two angels stand by the side of history," writes Jeanne's first Protestant apologist, De Quincey,

"as heraldic supporters; the angel of research on the left hand that must read millions of dusty parchments blotted with lies; and the angel of meditation on the right hand that must cleanse those lying records with fire and must quicken them with regenerate life." More than "two angels of meditation," by a strange irony of history, have appeared in the English-speaking world to interpret this shining figure, sometimes, it would seem, disparaged and misunderstood by certain academic judges in her own country:

But that is the modern method (writes Mr. Chesterton, of Anatole France's "Jeanne d'Arc"), the method of the reverent skeptic. When you find a life entirely incredible and incomprehensible from the outside, you pretend that you understand the inside. M. France read M. France's nature into Joan of Arc—all the cold kindness, all the homeless sentimentalism of the modern literary man..... As Anatole France, on his own intellectual principle, cannot believe in what Joan of Arc did, he professes to be her dearest friend and to know exactly what she meant. I cannot feel it to be a very rational way of writing history, and sooner or later we shall have to find some more solid way of dealing with those spiritual phenomena with which all history is as closely spotted and spangled as the sky is with stars. Joan of Arc is a wild and wonderful thing enough, but she is much more sane than most of her critics and biographers. We shall not recover the common-sense of Joan until we have recovered her mysticism..... Her war succeeded because it began with something wild and perfect—the Saints delivering France. She put her idealism in the right place, and her realism also in the right place; we moderns get both misplaced. She put her dreams and her sentiments into her aims where they ought to be; she put her practicality into her practice..... Our dreams, our aims, are always, we insist, quite practical. It is our practice that is dreaming. It is not for us to interpret this flaming figure in the terms of our tired and querulous culture. Rather we must try to explain ourselves by the blaze of such fixed stars.

Andrew Lang was one of the most industrious of Jeanne's defenders. Apart from his chivalrous tribute to her in that enthusiastic fantasy, "A Monk of Fife," he has spared no pains in his research for authority to prove her innocent heroism, and he adds his evidence to her character as a child of the Church: "There is no basis for the Protestant idea that Jeanne was a premature believer in Free Thought and the liberty of private opinion. She was as sound a Catholic as a

man or woman could be in matters of faith; she was only forced by injustice into maintaining her freedom in matters of fact, of personal experience."

LEPAGE'S PAINTING.

Although sculpture and painting have been pressed into the service of the Maid, there has been a certain dissatisfying unreality in most of these achievements. One of the countrymen of the Maid of Lorraine, impatient at the fancy of idealized statues and pictures of the peasant girl, boasted that he would paint a true Jeanne. In the Metropolitan Museum of New York hangs the famous painting by Bastien-Lepage which is not only a faithful portrait by one who understood his subject, but which is a curiously interpretative work of art. In its details the work may be unpleasing to one not in sympathy with the extreme impressionist manner, but the central figure compensates for any artistic annoyance and is to me a revelation. It somehow explains Jeanne. She is essentially a peasant, strong-boned, awkward perhaps; the wrists are thick, and there is a hint of thick ankles under the heavy homespun skirt. A bodice is crookedly laced over a coarse white chemisette and the entire figure, clumsy but modest, breathes the very spirit of toil. Above the firm column of neck is the fine outline of jaw, a strong, sweet mouth—good sensible features all; but over these and under the wide brow, from which the hair is carelessly drawn back into an ungraceful knot, is the essence and meaning of herself and her mission, the wonderful vision of the eyes. Just as Leonardo's sphinx-like Lady Lisa seems to draw all outward life into the dim recesses of her own observant mind, and throw the picture of it into her enigmatic smile, so, in contrast, this simple child of the soil looks quite out of herself into the region of things spiritual, unworldly and eternal. On her innocent soul the Divine inspiration falls unimpeded by mists of self and sin. To her attentive ear come the whisperings of those voices which were the messengers of the Divine will. It would be impossible to describe the peculiar self-detached attitude or to exaggerate the luminous clarity which Lepage has put into the eyes. They are not especially beautiful eyes—pale, wide,

with no effects of shadows or any touch of earth to enhance them, they hold, nevertheless, the expression which we recognize as that of an elect and virginal soul. The whole figure seems to radiate innocence. It embodies in color what De Quincey so reverently painted in words:

The poor shepherd girl from the hills and forests of Lorraine, that, like the Hebrew shepherd boy from the hills and forests of Judæa, rose suddenly out of the quiet, out of the safety, out of the religious inspiration rooted deep in pastoral solitudes, to a station in the van of armies and to the more perilous station at the right hand of kings..... She was a girl of natural piety that saw God in forests and hills and fountains, but did not the less seek Him in chapels and consecrated oratories. The peasant girl was self-educated through her own natural meditativeness..... It is not necessary to the honor of Joan, nor is there in this place room to pursue her brief career of action. That, though wonderful, forms the earthly part of her story; the spiritual part is the saintly passion of her imprisonment, trial, and execution.

It would seem as if this strange little northern champion of the Blessed Maid had, with Catholic and prophetic instinct, beatified her unofficially in his own musings. Even to those who ignore the religious inspiration of her mission, how unique and wonderful must be her position in history! There has just been Agincourt and its splendid hero, and the thrilling lines of Shakespeare's "O God of battles, steel my soldiers' hearts," stir in memory at the mere mention of the name. There has been the overwhelming triumph, the humiliating Treaty of Troyes, the fleur-de-lys quartered with the English arms—and then, opposed to the heroic figure of Henry V, the humble peasant of Domremy, keeping her father's sheep and spinning her mother's flax, and leading a life of piety and toil; then suddenly appearing at the head of an army and leading men to certain victory and the coronation of their rightful King, when this child was only seventeen. The brain reels at the swift miracle of it all—nor must we be too hard on the angry enemies who called her sorceress for such magical success. It is like a tale of impossible adventure, yet very simple and human is the Maid in the midst of it, making the

history of her military tactics and acute knowledge of situations all the more striking.

ANDREW LANG'S TRIBUTE.

It is worth while to quote in this connection part of the account of the taking of Les Tourelles as described in Andrew Lang's "Maid of France." It helps us to enter into the wonder of the thing, and in the light of recent events we are now more keenly interested in this strange, quick campaign, with its strategy, its swift assault, its restrained waitings, the order and discipline of it all, under the leadership of an unlettered country girl. We read in an earlier chapter that "The Maid always bore her standard when in action, that she might strike no man with the sword. She never slew any man with the sword." The taking of Les Tourelles she acknowledges "gave me much more to do, more than I ever had yet":

At sunrise on May 7th, Jeanne heard Mass. The attack began early in the morning....and well the English fought, for the French were scaling at once in different places, in thick swamps, attacking on the highest part of their walls, with such hardihood and valor that to see them you would have thought they deemed themselves immortal. But the English drove them back many times and tumbled them from high to low, fighting with bow-shot and gunpowder, with axes, lances, bills, and leaden maces, and even with their fists. . . . Ladders were rising, men were climbing them; the ladders were overthrown, or the climbers were shot, or smitten, or grappled with and dashed into the fosse; while the air whirred to the flight of arrows and bolts, and the smoke rose sulphurous from the mouths of guns. The standard of the Maid floated hard by the wall till, about noon-day, a bolt or arrow pierced her shoulder plate as she climbed the first ladder, and the point passed clean through the armor and body, standing out a hand's breadth behind. She shrank and wept, says her confessor. Probably her place in the front rank was not long empty. There she stood under her banner and cried on her French and Scots; but they were weary and the sun fell, and the men who had said that "in a month that fort could scarce be taken," lost heart as the lights of Orleans began to reflect themselves in the waters of the Loire..... "Doubt not; the place is ours," called the clear, girlish voice. But Dunois held that there was no hope of victory this day; and he had to sound the recall, and gave orders to withdraw across the river to the city..... "But, then," continued Dunois, "the Maid came to me, and asked me to wait yet a little while." Then she

mounted her horse and went alone into a vineyard, some way from the throng of men, and in that vineyard she abode in prayer for about a quarter of an hour. Then she came back, and straightway took her standard into her hands and planted it on the edge of the fosse.....The English, seeing the wounded witch again where she had stood from early morning, "shuddered, and fear fell upon them," says Dunois. His language is Homeric.

Then follows the stirring recital of the onslaught, upon the command of the Maid to enter; the complete victory of the French, the loss to a man of the sturdy English who fell into the moat and were drowned by the weight of their heavy armor:

Steel, fire, water had conspired against them. Jeanne saw this last horror of the fight. She knelt, weeping and praying for her enemies and insulters. The joy bells of Orleans sounded across the dark Loire, lit with red flames.....She had kept her word, she had shown her sign, and the tide of English arms never again surged so far as the City of St. Aignan. The victory, her companions in arms attest, was all her own. They had despaired, they were in retreat, when she, bitterly wounded as she was, recalled them to the charge. Within less than a week of her first day under fire the girl of seventeen had done what Wolfe did on the heights of Abraham, what Bruce did at Bannockburn. She had gained one of the fifteen decisive battles of the world.

Some features of the conflict now past, and crowned with a victory almost undreamed of in its terrific completeness, recall that other heroic epoch of French history in some of its spiritual aspects. At the first Battle of the Marne, Kitchener was heard to exclaim: "Someone has been praying." Was it the intercession of those exiled nuns driven from France to the kindly shores of England which helped to gain that first strange victory in the beloved country from which they were torn but not estranged? Is it perhaps England's hospitality to these consecrated ones which won her a welcome in Bethlehem on the Christmas Day of 1917, when all was dark, and the taking of Jerusalem came to the Allies like a smile of God in the night? In the perspective of events since the French Revolution, this might easily be so. In any case, the English warriors had many a grateful beads-woman of whose existence they were ignorant.

But although prayer was deep in the hearts of the people and made the background of every passing victory or escape from imminent danger, anyone who followed attentively the outward currents of life, and who could notice, for instance, the tone of the English press as the public expression of feeling, could not but be struck by the absence of all creaturely attitude. Self-reliance, human courage, a belief in British integrity and ultimate invincibility—and then when the black moment came the heroic effort to meet the need by sheer grit—all these were splendid exhibitions of national and natural virtue. But there was never a word about our dependence upon God. Then suddenly there came a change, welcome to those who had long and anxiously looked for it. Column after column appeared in the daily papers of appeals for prayer, of reminders of our human limitations and conditions, of our powerlessness without the Divine assistance. And the country responded with an almost audible sigh of relief. There ensued not a day of appointed prayer, but an atmosphere of prayer, and a distinct attitude of dependence.

THE MAN OF THE HOUR.

And attitude makes all the difference. It would seem as if this was what was wanting, for as soon as the note of the Miserere was struck in public utterance, help came in a signal and unmistakable way. The Man of the Hour, the darkest hour in European history, stood suddenly revealed, and by universal consent was appointed to the supreme command of the Allied armies; chosen by men because of his unique military genius, but Divinely predestined to be the savior of his country because he was humble enough and simple enough to bear his almost miraculous success without taking God's glory for his own. A man of prayer, a daily communicant, a soldier whose Catholic principle had been more to him than any worldly promotion, he stood aside from himself and let God live and work through him, and the end was achieved with the magnificence that belongs to all God's unimpeded workings. In the accomplishment of that end let us grant the full need of praise to the heroic sacrifices of four years of strain and persistence. Human

valor held the seas and defended threatened territory with an enduring determination beyond all measure. But just as in the time of Jeanne there came a crisis when it seemed as if France were lost to her own children and in that awful moment deliverance came, so in the tense months of suspense between the collapse of Russia and the coming of United States troops, when England was spent with her superhuman effort and France was bleeding to death, when the German hordes were pouring in from the East to the Western Front, when to those who could not still hope and believe, all seemed lost, in that hour of possible catastrophe, the Allies realized the meaning of those words of the great Marshal Foch: "Prayer has saved the Allies before in this deadly struggle and it will save it again."

In this war of high averages, where most men are heroes and all are brave, one asks what it is that has raised this officer to such undisputed and ungrudged eminence and ascendancy? For Foch does not seem to challenge jealousy. There is but one title to such unique prestige as his: It is the supernatural character of the man, his spiritual dominance, his detachment. On the face of history it will be written that the superb strategy of the Generalissimo saved the final situation, but on the lips and deep in the heart of this humble instrument of the Divine will are other words, those that show the right to conquest. "*Non nobis Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam.*" And even before the splendid reinforcement in men and spirit that came in a wave of enthusiasm from the New World, the victory of the Allies was assured. All the rest counted and helped, but the turn of the tide was due to the supernatural. Once more the motto of France's deliverance was that of the Maid, "*Da Par le Roy du Ciel.*"

And so, too, the explanation of Jeanne is simple enough. God intended France to be, not a vassal, but a country complete in herself and He chose a selfless instrument for the most difficult part in the accomplishment of this design. Power is made perfect in infirmity; and in the unspoiled grace of her meek and radiant girlhood there was no impediment to the Di-

vine will. She knew her place, her work was official, and if there had not been the burning at Rouen, there would have begun again the old shepherdess life at Domremy. The storming of a citadel and the keeping of her father's sheep were equally in the day's work of God's appointment. She might have shirked the difficult task. She certainly had her natural shrinkings, but there was in her something stronger than herself. That gentle girl was a very shrine of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. She is only hard to understand because her life is on supernatural lines from first to last, while her soft natural girlishness reminds us how human a thing and feminine Jeanne was. And so prompted by the Divine inspiration she accepted her difficult mission—the toil of it, the passing glory of it, the ensuing shame and pain of it, and the final consumption of her poor earthly frame. How splendid in the perspective of history is the pathetic figure in the dreadful burning! Who would have it otherwise? Theology and art accept it as the apotheosis of the Maid, the glorious failure of the earthly part. Throughout her dramatic career there was never a moment's pose or pretense. What faults she committed were never of pride, but of some passing timidity or weakness, in short, wild hunted moments, like the leaping from the Tower of Beaurevoir, and that wearied assent to her persecutors after she had plaintively begged for the Life-giving Sacrament and had been refused its strength. She was ever human and we love to think of her, not riding triumphantly across the bridge at Orleans, or standing with her victorious banner beside the crowned King at Rheims, but crying meekly from her throne of smoke and flame, "Jesus! Jesus!" forgiving those who indeed knew not what they did, gentle and feminine to the last.

And since her solemn Beatification in 1909, we may not sit in judgment of her even if we would. The Maid has sustained the ordeal of her last earthly tribunal and is beyond the reach of speculation. She is authoritatively declared to have passed from the Church Militant (and such indeed it was to her) to the Church Triumphant. But even now in this later hour of victory, her work is not completed. It is time

for her to look again to the lilies of France in the hearts of her young children; to enthrone another King, not in the ancient seat of earthly sovereigns, blighted and blasted in this fearful war, but in the ranks of all who hail as Mother her who is the eldest daughter of the Church. Look to your *fleur-de-lys* even now, holy Jeanne, in this hour of France's earthly triumph!

It is indeed part of her unfinished work to bring back to the government of Christain-hearted France her old inheritance of faith. If the fruit of temporal blessings was garnered in her own time and is ready for garnering now, surely there is a richer spiritual harvest at hand for her country's greater need. That death was rich enough in pain for plentiful grain, for never was martyrdom more prolonged and forlorn. Her dereliction was piteous indeed. The desolation of misunderstanding, the maidenly quiverings from protracted insult, the weary waiting in captivity of this child of air and sun and freedom, the human dread of torture and death; the unutterable longing for the Sacraments which were denied her in her character as witch; the vague alarm and suspense, the darkness of it and its nameless horrors encompassed her with a cloud of terror. But the anguish had its hour, and when at last the Bread of Life was given her, she arose, strong in the memory of another Passion, and went forth in meek submission to meet her flaming death. That was her fitting end. There was more of fire than earth in Jeanne—for her there was to be no slow decay, no humiliating dissolution. From the charred and tortured body the heroic spirit issued, flame from flame.

Non-Catholic Doctors in Catholic Families

JOHN L. BELFORD.

From the "Nativity Mentor."

AMONG Catholics, sickness and religion are intimately connected; the hand of God is recognized in both; hence the helper in one and the guide in the other share a respect and confidence given none else. A physician in any family is frequently entrusted with its confidence, its honor and, at times, its very existence, and nobly has the medical profession accepted the trust. In the Catholic family, the doctor is something more than a physician; to him is intrusted not merely the temporal welfare of his patients, but often their spiritual future. His professional ability may be questioned by the Catholic; his professional honor rarely. This being the case a doctor who accepts a call to a Catholic accepts also the responsibility which that Catholic associates with all sickness. With responsibility accepted comes obligation to meet it. Nowadays some medical schools see to it that their students realize this responsibility and consequent obligation, and all details are duly explained. In the past it was not so. For the benefit of those who have not had this particular instruction we give a few hints for guidance.

Four Sacraments of the Church are brought to the direct notice of the doctor attending the Catholic family; not always on one occasion, but at some time or other he is in a certain way connected with their administration. These are: Baptism, Penance or Confession, Holy Eucharist or Communion, Extreme Unction or Anointing.

Intelligently to meet his obligations the doctor should know about Baptism. The Catholic belief, founded on the words of Jesus Christ, is (a) that Baptism is *absolutely necessary* for salvation; (b) that the soul exists in a body before birth, and is capable of all that the soul of man can do as far as seeing God and understanding Him in the Kingdom of Heaven; (c) that the soul of the child who dies before birth or immediately after birth is just as much dependent on Baptism for its eternal salva-

tion as the soul of the mature man ; hence the doctor called to a case of confinement in a Catholic family is expected by that family to baptize that child *before* birth, if it is reasonably feared it may not be born alive, and *after* birth if immediate death is apprehended. For all cases of this kind it is simply necessary that ordinary water should be brought in contact with the body of the infant, preferably, but not necessarily, the head (the placenta is not a portion of the child's body), and say *at the same time*, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." *All* these words must be pronounced with the intention of doing what the Catholic Church requires. If the child is born alive, but in immediate danger of death, any Catholic lay person should administer Baptism ; if none such is near, then let the doctor do so.

The non-Catholic doctor should know about Penance or Confession. Every Catholic, even the most depraved, wishes in case of a serious sickness or accident to confess his sins to a priest, and thereby obtain pardon for them, according to the power given by Christ when he instituted this Sacrament, saying, "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven, whose sins you shall retain they are retained." Therefore the patient's mind should not be deadened by drugs or anesthetics until he has made his Confession. He is perfectly willing to put up with some pain in order to do this. But if, as in a serious accident, it is necessary to administer an anesthetic in order by operating to save the man's life, it can be done without waiting for the arrival of the priest, who, when he does come, may absolve and anoint conditionally and then wait for the man to be restored to his senses. Remember, a Catholic is willing to suffer much pain in sickness in order to make his Confession and does not wish his mind clouded until that task is over.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

Confession is generally followed by the administration of the Holy Eucharist, which the Catholic believes to be the Sacrament that contains the living Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, God and Man, under the appearance of what looks to the bystander as a small piece of bread, but which the sick man firmly believes

is not bread, but Jesus Christ Himself under this form. Hence, while he does not expect from the attending non-Catholic doctor the same belief, he does expect, if the doctor be present, a respect for his belief manifested by a decorous and dignified bearing. As regards the administration of medicines in the case of a seriously sick person about to receive Holy Communion, the doctor is expected not to give any medicine that would cause vomiting for at least twenty minutes after Communion is received.

In the Epistle of St. James, X: 14-15, are these words: "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." Catholics believe these words refer to the Sacrament instituted by Christ and called Extreme Unction or the Last Anointing. The priest anoints with the holy oil consecrated by the Bishop on Holy Thursday, the five senses of the sick person and recites over him the prescribed prayers. It is not necessary that the sick person be conscious to receive this Sacrament, hence in case of a grave accident, where haste is necessary, the priest can administer this last rite on the street, by the railroad track, in the mill, anywhere the accident occurs, and while he is doing so the surgeon, if necessity demands, may continue his work on the injured person, but without heedless conversation that would detract from the solemnity and respect due the Sacrament. It is evident from this that a priest should be immediately called in case of accident. The doctor need have no fear when called to the bedside of the seriously sick that the presence of the priest may needlessly alarm the patient. The opposite happens, for the Sacrament not only prepares the person to die well but gives mental courage and ease and a reconciliation to the Divine will, all of which produces a calm and tranquillity that is a help to the doctor. All physicians of observation have noted that a favorable change in the disposition of the patient is a result of this Sacrament, which was also instituted to restore health, if God so wills. From all this it may be in-

ferred that the Catholic family expects to be notified of the necessity of sending for the priest, and in time, while the patient has still full use of all his faculties.

In case of hysterical people who unreasonably and continually send for the priest, especially at night time, the doctor should use his judgment and common-sense to save the priest unnecessary annoyance.

No Catholic may allow a doctor to procure an abortion, to perform craniotomy (while the child is living) or to suggest means to prevent the course of nature. The unborn child has a right to its life. The mother, then, never should be saved by the murder of the child, for the killing of the unborn child is deliberate murder of the worst kind because the victim is helpless, and it destroys a soul as well as a life. It is ever the physician's province to save life and not to destroy it. His skill is shown by avoiding rather than by performing craniotomy, which requires very little skill or knowledge; he should be able to perform the caesarian section or turn the case over to a more competent doctor; in any event the life of the mother must never be saved by the murder of the child.

These are brief but essential points for the non-Catholic doctor; to go into details is outside the scope of this article, but the doctor who wishes further information can easily obtain it from any priest. It is sometimes asked, "Does not the pastor advise families to discharge a non-Catholic doctor and employ a Catholic instead?" To do so without reason would be a sin, for it deprives a man of his means of living. However, if the rights of the soul are neglected or infringed upon by any of the ways mentioned in this article, the pastor will not hesitate, in fact he is bound, to warn his people against such a doctor, Catholic or non-Catholic, and advise them to employ another, not necessarily a Catholic. Happily the occasion for such drastic measures is very rare. The medical profession, like others, has its black sheep; but it is the experience of the clergy that non-Catholic doctors are honorable representatives of an honorable calling, and zealously carry out the rules of the Church when treating Catholic patients. Unfortunately it is true that non-Catholics, lay people as well as doctors, do not

look upon abortion and craniotomy as Catholics regard them, viz., cold-blooded murder. When, however, the matter is put before them in a Catholic light, doctors, who do not profess our Faith, strictly observe the rules of the Church in Catholic families.

The Power of Catholic Literature

From the "Sentinel of the Blessed Sacrament."

REMEMBER of old it was wisely said: "Tell me with whom you associate and I'll tell you who you are." But we may add, "Just tell me what you read and I'll tell you what you are." If from the associates of a person we judge his character, more infallibly may we pronounce sentence upon his moral and intellectual calibre from the literature he reads.

Books, ever at hand, are often even more powerful and lasting in urging one to good and influencing to evil than friends of flesh and blood; they often form the basis of a life of virtue or sin, of bliss or misery. As sad as undeniable is the fact that we find extremely little instructive or edifying literature on the table of otherwise even well-meaning Catholic homes. They also gorge themselves with the base, infidel, sentimental, sensational, licentious, scandalous, and even lascivious print, that flows in superabundance from a godless press today; so detrimental to the intellect of young and old, to body and soul, for time and eternity. Literature of this class acts upon the passions as oil upon smouldering coals, as fire when held to straw. It inflames the passions, degrades the heart, excites to vice and crime. Alas! that even children of tenderest age are fed upon such rot in the very sanctuary of the home, and thereby lose all sense of virtue and innocence so soon. Their intellectual appetite is vitiated by the permission of their parents. Reading is the rage of the times; but while ninety per cent of the adults of this country read, it is painful to behold upon what filthy, sordid matter they waste the eyesight, feed the mind, poison the intellect, and prevert the

reason God has given them, the most excellent gifts the Creator could have bestowed upon the creature.

Such readers become the spectators of lust-inflaming dramas and degrading performances, and not only lose all respect for virtue, but, taught new crimes and craving for the real, soon fall a lifelong victim to the practice of the rot that crams their morbid brain.

Parents are shocked at the very thought of harming their children yet they dwarf their intellect and starve their mind by withholding good reading matter from them. Physical growth without mental development, without purity of mind and cultivation of wholesome thought may beget a giant, but never a man. Ask the criminal behind the bars what sent him there, and mostly he points to the trash that crazed his brain and made it ripe for crime. Yes, as many a soul in hell owes his life of sin and shame and never-ending pain to evil suggestions, so well disguised in bad books and immoral literature of all kinds; so many a saint would share his fate, were it not for the good effect of a wholesome article he chanced to read. I need but to refer to a depraved youth, Augustine by name, who was so forcibly impressed by the page he read in his mother's book, that it laid in him the foundation of a most useful and fruitful life of heroic virtue, and thus helped to effect what the preaching of a bishop and the prayers of a mother could not accomplish in nineteen years. And Ignatius, that soldier of fortune, was transformed to a general of Christ by a book, at which he sneered at first, but read at last; and became the founder of an army of sages and saints, the Jesuits. Is, then, the grace of God less powerful today? Might not good literature prevent much harm or perform a similar miracle in your family? And were it only once in a life-time, or for one soul out of a thousand, would it not pay?

BUT YOU OBJECT AND SAY.

1.—“There is not much Catholic literature; books are few.” Untrue!—Plenty of it of every description, and cheap enough, too; on all possible subjects, written by men eminent for learning and science, and published under the sanction of the highest authorities

of the Church. Indeed, there are nowadays almost countless good books, papers and periodicals of this class ever at hand to those seeking, and they are faith-inspiring books besides being of great interest and up-to-date in every detail.

2.—“They will not read them,” is your reply. Impossible! How can they, when they get no chance—none found in the home? What may one expect from children when parents set them no good example? If found on the table curiosity will frequently urge inspection and will soon arouse interest.

3.—“I can’t afford it,” is your next lame excuse. Not so bad, if it were true! Did you never waste many a dollar more foolishly than that, even to the injury of body and soul? Why so parsimonious all at once? You’re beginning to save at the wrong end. Just recently the words of one of our bishops passed from shore to shore stating that no better alms could be given than that laid aside for sound Catholic reading.

4.—“I find no time to read,” you say. Not a wonder! You haven’t been looking for it. How often do you complain of “having nothing to do to kill time?” How much do you waste daily?

If but a fraction of the time and a low per cent. of the interest of the money so prodigally wasted in vitiating and degrading comics, sensational dailies, licentious weeklies and scandalous magazines, were saved and applied to procuring wholesome reading matter in every home, the individual, the family, the Church, society and the world at large would be a thousand times the better for it. It requires but a few moments daily, a few cents a month. Good literature consoles, cheers, instructs, edifies, re-ignites zeal and fervor in religion and leads young and old to the practice of a far more virtuous and devout Catholic life.

WHAT YOU NEED FOR THE FAMILY.

Now, let’s hear what good reading, what Catholic literature, is found on your table! None? And you a Christian, a Catholic at that? ‘Tis almost a contradiction in terms. Nothing suitable for developing minds of your children, for your bright sons and daughters

advancing in years, to feed on, to quench their thirst for information and their hunger for knowledge of the more serious questions of life?

"Yes, yes," you respond, "there's the Bible, the best book in the world, and the 'Lives of the Saints' with its thousands of pages. What more do you want?" Pardon, please, 'tis true, these books cannot be excelled; but with our books it's much as with our food—no matter how good in themselves, if there is no relish for them or they are too hard to digest we have recourse to others and do not starve ourselves or family. In this age of unlimited progress, even virtue must be presented with another garb, and the old and ever undeniable truths clothed in a new form. Too bad, indeed, that these most sacred books even when found in a home are allowed to accumulate so much dust; but what you need in your home is a bright Catholic weekly paper, keeping abreast with the times and apace with current events, an up-to-date monthly magazine or two, reviewing important occurrences, not while they are creating an uproar, but with calm deliberation and unbiased judgement when the dense columns of dust and smoke have vanished and the flutter of passion has been subdued or altogether subsided. This is what every home should get fresh every week, every month. It would stimulate reading so that members of the family would vie with each other to read the paper first. Conversation would soon be the discussion of these topics. If you know not where to get them ask your pastor, who will cheerfully give you the information.

Add to these a few standard books on doctrine, faith, morals, a few cheering stories, and you have all that you need. The rest may be found on the shelves of the well-stacked but rather seldom visited departments of our numerous libraries, to which recourse may be had at any time and with the greatest convenience.

MIRACULOUS POWER OF THE PRESS.

Learn from the enemies, who are ever alert circulating their libelous papers, infamous and nefarious sheets, villainous pamphlets and hell-begotten books,

in wholesale quantities, at much expense and with no small amount of personal sacrifice, as they flow in torrents from the monster presses. Eh! We know your objection. Be patient just a moment! We dare not ask so much of you. Much less will do. Did it really never occur to you how much reading a printed page will stand? Could you not after the family has read such good papers, pamphlets, periodicals and magazines, mail them on to your relatives, perhaps somewhat lax or lukewarm in their religion; send them to your friends, a little narrow-minded or bigoted against the Church, give them to your associates and companions, sneering at your piety and scrupulous obedience to the laws of God and of the Church? Could you not hand them to a scoffing employer, who often cuts you by his pointed remarks; to an employee who, though good-natured, seems to be notably ignorant of his religious duties and makes unpardonable mistakes?

How many in your office, shop or store, Catholics and non-Catholics, would thus not only have their erroneous ideas transformed and act far differently but would also become acquainted with literature they never dreamt of, a vast contrast to the trash that so long clogged their brain and beclouded their intellect, excluding much of the sunshine of the nobler life? How many of these would not some later day take you by the hand and thank you a thousand times for your thoughtfulness, and attribute their change of mind, practice of virtue, or even conversion, to such an easy and trifling little, but much appreciated, act of kindness? How many will read such literature at leisure, whilst they would scorn to listen to your voice or even to approach a pulpit to hear the same truths? "Never destroy good literature, but pass it on; it will do much good," should be well impressed on every one. Carry such literature in your pocket, give it away, drop it on the seat of a car, leave it behind in the train, slip it into the magazine rack of a library, send it in bundles to public and charitable institutions, such as hospitals, homes for the aged, schools of correction and prisons. 'Tis true whatever you thus accomplish to stem the tide of the on-flowing immorality of the press, may not even compare to the drop of crystal water lost in

the ocean's briny deep, or swallowed up by the billowing waves, but consider it rather as the little seed that fell on good ground, took root and brought forth a hundred-fold fruit; as the little mustard seed, so tiny and yet producing a tree so tall and strong that flocks of birds rest thereon. So may that book or paper produce its fruit in time.

You owe it to yourself, to your own mind and intellect, to your family, to the cause of truth, to your religion most sacred. They all cry out to you to read that which is good, which ennobles the mind and is worthy of the intellect God gave you, by which He created you a little less than the angels. "Just tell Me what you read and I'll tell you what you are."